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Protracted conflicts in the GUAM area and their implications for international peace, security and development

Security Council
Sixty-fourth year

Identical letters dated 3 March 2009 from the Permanent Representative of Georgia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to transmit the statement issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia on 27 February 2009 (see annex).

I would be grateful if the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the sixty-third session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 13, "Protracted conflicts in the GUAM area and their implications for international peace, security and development", and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Alexander **Lomaia**
Permanent Representative

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Annex to the identical letters dated 3 March 2009 from the Permanent Representative of Georgia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

Statement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia

About 50 families expelled from the village of Otobaia

On 25 February 2009, in the village of Otobaia, Gali district, a local resident, I. Bigvava, was brutally beaten and wounded by gunfire after he refused to enrol in the so-called Abkhazian army. On 26 February, as a follow-up measure designed to intimidate the local population, armed militias of the Sokhumi proxy regime, acting under the patronage of the Russian troops, expelled about 50 families from the village of Otobaia. These facts indicate once again that the practice of forced conscription of locals in the so-called Abkhazian army and the intimidation and harassment of the population continues to take place in the Gali district. The incident of 26 February provides clear evidence that there is a serious threat of a new wave of ethnic cleansing and of a recurrence of the events of 1998.

In parallel to the aforesaid incidents, on 26 February 2009, the Russian occupation troops deployed an additional 30 armoured vehicles in the village of Nabakevi.

By introducing hardware in the Gali district, the Russian Federation violates paragraph 2 of Security Council resolution 1866 (2009) of 13 February 2009, in which the Council called for respect for a definite regime in the security zones. Moreover, the Russian Federation's aforesaid action is a violation of the six-point agreement of 12 August 2008.

It was with the very goal of avoiding such incidents that participants of the Geneva talks reached an agreement on the mechanism for incident prevention and response on 17 and 18 February 2009. Acts committed by illegal gangs of the proxy regimes and the Russian occupation troops indicate clearly that the Russian Federation and the proxy regime under its control are far from intending to put in place the mechanisms under the aforementioned document and stabilizing the situation in the region.

The aforementioned incidents make it obvious that the Russian Federation still continues to defy its international commitments.

In this situation, the international community should do all in its power in order to avoid further escalation of the situation, which may once again entail dire consequences.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia expresses its extreme concern and strong protest over this, yet another, provocative incident carried out on Georgia's occupied territory, and reaffirms that responsibility for this culpable action rests exclusively with the Russian Federation.

27 February 2009
Press and Information Department